

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
MAYOR



KEITH A. REGAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Ke'ena O Ka Meia
COUNTY OF MAUI – Kalana O Maui

TESTIMONY OF ALAN ARAKAWA, MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
AND
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, January 19, 2018
1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 325
State Capitol

RELATING TO INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING

Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Sen. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Thank you for this opportunity to come before this joint-committee and present Maui County's priorities for this session. On behalf of my administration and the people of Maui County I want to thank you for your continued dedication, hard work, and commitment.

While there are a number of important issues that need to be addressed, my administration has whittled-down our priorities to the following:

1. *Front Street Apartments in Lahaina.*

Maui County supports efforts to preserve Front Street Apartments as an affordable rental housing project. The current tenants are low to very low income, senior citizens and/or disabled, and represent our most vulnerable residents.

The affordable housing shortage on Maui is at crisis levels. A recent Hawaii Housing Planning Study indicated a need for 12,000 housing units on Maui for 2015-2025.

Rental prices are exorbitant, and the limited number of shelters are already at, or near, full capacity. Simply put, without the Front Street Apartments being kept affordable, these residents would have no place to go and many may become homeless.

2. Funding for the Expansion of the Kula Ag Parks.

As Senate President Ron Kouchi articulated in his remarks at the opening of the 29th Legislative Biennium Session on January 17, 2018, putting active production on Hawaii's agricultural lands is of critical importance as it plays a vital role in our islands' economy, environment, and way of life. As leaders and decision-makers, we have an extraordinary opportunity to preserve and perpetuate agriculture for future generations and to address the important issue of food security. In order to do this, I am humbly requesting funds (\$5 million) to proceed with the second phase of the 800+-acre Kula Ag Park expansion project; and,

3. CIP Funding to construct a new Central Maui Transit Hub.

On October 5, 2017, Maui County was informed by the Queen Kaahumanu Center that our lease would not be renewed for public transit purposes on their premises. The license is set to expire on January 31, 2020.

Maui public transportation system is essential for both residents and visitors. The system operates from 5:30 a.m. until 11 p.m., 7 days a week, and logs over 2.1 million boardings annually.

Fortunately, we have identified an ideal new location that is near the existing hub, adjacent to 165 senior rental units and a mixed use project that includes low income rentals, and is in close proximity to shops, restaurants and medical facilities. (The parcel is situated at the corner of Vevau Street and Kane Street, TMK (2) 3-7-004-003.)

Maui County will be funding the planning and design phase. We are humbly requesting \$2.5 million in CIP funding from the legislature for this important project.

Please know that I will be in attendance at your joint-committee meeting on January 19th should you have any questions. Again, thank you for your consideration of these important matters.